

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HIGHER EDUCATION & ENERGY COMMITTEE
AND
VETERANS & SENIORS COMMITTEE
of the
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

Special Meeting – Capital Budget Minutes

A special joint meeting of the Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy Committee and the Veterans & Seniors Committee was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on **May 25, 2004**, to discuss the matter of the Capital Budget.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator Daniel P. Losquadro • Chairman/Veterans & Seniors

Legislator Lynne C. Nowick • Chairperson/Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy

Legislator Angie Carpenter • Vice Chair/Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy

Legislator Jay H. Schneiderman • Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy

Legislator Peter O'Leary • Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy

Legislator Vivian•Fisher • Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy

Legislator Brian Foley • Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy

Legislator Cameron Alden • Veterans & Seniors

Legislator Andrew Crecca • Veterans & Seniors

Legislator Elie Mystal • Veterans & Seniors

Members Not Present

Legislator Jon Cooper • Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy, Veterans & Seniors

Legislator William J. Lindsay • Veterans & Seniors

Also in Attendance

Mea Knapp, Counsel to the Legislature

Ilona Julius, Deputy Clerk

Jim Spero, Budget Review Office

Joe Muncey, Budget Review Office

Bob Bortzfeld, County Executive's Office

Roger Podd, County Executive's Office

David Quinn

Joseph Maisonet

Kevin Rooney

Jennifer Golding

Eric Pilletere

Carolyn Fahey

Charles K. Stein

Minutes Taken By:

Diana Kraus • Court Stenographer

(THE MEETING WAS CONVENED AT 11:34 AM)

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Good morning. I call the joint session of Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy and Veterans and Seniors to order. We'll start with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Schneiderman.

(SALUTATION)

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Thank you. We'll go straight to the public portion. We have a number of cards. First up is Mr. David Quinn.

MR. QUINN:

Good morning. My name is David Quinn. I'm the campus head librarian at the Grant Campus. In my estimation the Grant Campus is in great need of a learning resource center. And I think •• oh, sorry. I think the Learning Resource Center for the Grant Campus is probably the most important building project we can do for our students and our faculty. A good library is really the heart of any college that aspires to excellence. And this I don't think is a romantic or an outdated metaphor. I think it's as valid today in the digital world as it was in print.

In 1999, Walt Crawford said three important things. One, the debate of digital versus print is

not only boring but dead; that sensible people realize that print is not going away. And that books are here to stay. Also, that only a fraction of the world's knowledge is on line; is in digital form. Finally, what he said was that in today's digital world, libraries need even more space to do it right. And that the space has become more complex. The current library is fifteen thousand square feet, which is really only one half of SUNY standards based on FTE enrollment. The building was designed in 1985, '86 in a building program, which predates the WWW, which predated online catalog. So, what we've done in 1990, we put up a building that at the time was below SUNY standards for the enrollment, which was 5700 students. Today our FTE, or our head count, is 7400. That's nearly a third increase. The overall effect of this is that we have two few public access work stations. We lack the classroom to teach information literacy on line. Just so you know that print is not dead, when we first moved in, we had 47 book stacks or sections in the reference area. Today we have 77 and it wraps into the circulation study area. That was an increase of almost 63% in fifteen years. In addition, there's insufficient space for group study, quiet study; insufficient space for doing multi-media design work which we do in our media department.

Finally, in 2002 when Middle States came in for a periodic review, they'd come in 1997 for accreditation process, every five years they come in, they strongly supported this project with the recognition that we had truly outgrown the space.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Mr. Quinn, sorry, I forgot to mention earlier, you have three minutes. I just •• if you could sum up, I'll give you another minute or so.

MR. QUINN:

Sure, absolutely. Thank you. I think that the state and other counties understand the importance of libraries in community colleges. Dutchess County with an enrollment of 6400 in 2001 doubled their library space. And they built almost a 40,000 square foot library. So, obviously there is support and recognition that libraries are important at community colleges.

Finally, I'd just like to say that in freeing up the space in the •• the space that the library now houses, we could put in labs, classrooms; and, in fact, our enrollment this summer for the microbiology course filled up in 45 minutes. If we had another lab, we could have offered another course.

Finally, in conclusion, a free standing learning resource center is essential to deliver our claim and our promise to our students and the County residents that the education at Suffolk

Community College is not second to those that they could get at a four-year college. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Thank you. If you could just wait one moment, I believe we have at least one question.

LEG. ALDEN:

My first question, Jim Spero, where does this project stand as far as the status?

MR. SPERO:

It's been •• it's not included in the proposed capital program. If the Legislature wants to move ahead with the project, we recommended putting the funding in for this project and the tangential project for the renovations for the Sagtikos Building in subsequent years in the capital program. This will enable the college to go to the state and seek state aid when the state prepares it's next five-year funding plan.

LEG. ALDEN:

Okay. As far as the status at Suffolk Community College, where does this rank?

MR. QUINN:

For our campus it's right up there. In terms of importance, we also have an HVAC project for this campus, so it's high on the list.

LEG. ALDEN:

So subsequent speakers are going to ••

MR. QUINN:

Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:

Okay. Thanks a lot.

MR. QUINN:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Thank you, Mr. Quinn. Next speaker Joseph Maisonet.

MR. MAISONET:

I just began attending Suffolk Community College last semester. And I'm a liberal arts major. I've been to other colleges and universities. And the library at Suffolk Community College is just not up to par with the rest of the libraries that we have at other colleges and other universities. When I walk in there, the first thing I think of is where's the rest? Most libraries I've been to in other schools have cafes, they have more open area for students to go and congregate together and do a group study. The library is small •• is so small that when a group of people go in there to do a group study, it becomes too loud for other people who are in there on their own to complete what they need to do. I took a tour of students in there a couple of weeks ago. And one of them said to me, well, where's the rest? And that is a continuing question not only in my mind but in other students' or potential students' minds, where's the rest?

We need •• as Dr. Quinn said, we need more space, more group study space, and also more books. When I walk in there, I think there's maybe ten rows of books. And it's minuscule even compared to the library I had in high school in size and in volumes of books. So, basically from a student's point of view, we need more space and more books. And that's all I have.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Thank you, Mr. Maisonet. Next speaker, Kevin Rooney.

MR. ROONEY:

Mr. Chairman, I'm informed by Chuck Stein from Suffolk Community College that there are two or three other students here waiting to speak. Given the fact that they probably have other things to go off to, if I could defer my speaking and let them speak before me, I'm sure they would appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

That's fine. I don't know those individual's names so will you be Jennifer? Next speaker will be Jennifer Golding.

MS. GOLDING:

Good morning. I am Jennifer Golding. I am a recent graduate of Suffolk Community College Eastern Campus. In regards to the County Executive's proposed capital budget and program, I was dismayed to find that Mr. Levy had left out a much needed project, which is the Learning

Resource Center, the Eastern Campus. Over the past 27 years, the full time enrollment at the Eastern Campus has grown expedientially while the size of the library has remained virtually the same. Back in 1977 when the Eastern Campus was first opened, the design for the campus included eight buildings but only three were built. The space that the library has occupied since 1977 was supposed to be a student lounge. It occupied substandard space then and continues to occupy it now.

More recently over the past four years full•time enrollment at the Eastern Campus has grown 26%. This trend will continue as more and more students in Suffolk County realize that Suffolk County Community College is the best educational bargain they can ever receive. But while the Ammerman and Grant Campuses can both sustain the influx of new enrollment to an extent, the Eastern Campus is being stretched beyond capacity. Suffolk County Community College is a crediting body. The Middle States evaluation team last reviewed the Eastern Campus in May of '97. I take a quote from their report. "The Eastern Campus library is comprised of rooms, hallways and closets. Library space is unacceptable including inadequate student study space." And it goes on further to say that students and faculty are prevented direct access for certain periodicals due to library space. It should be noted that since their comments were made seven years ago, student enrollment has increased by about 30%. And I should further note that with over 2800 students on our campus currently, there are only ten computers available for students to use to write terms papers and so on.

SUNY has stated that based on our enrollment figures, we need a 21,000 square foot library to accommodate our students and faculty. The library currently occupies a mere 6,600 square feet. In order for the Eastern Campus to maintain its high standard of education and to continue to turn out bright, successful students every year, the library must be renovated to accommodate an ever changing evolving educational environment.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Thank you, Miss Golding. Our next speaker is Eric Pilletere.

MR. PILLETIERE:

Good afternoon, Honorable Legislators. This past week I wondered how effective I would be in coming here to speak. And I thought that I am only one voice and what difference do I make? First, let me say that I am not one voice, but I represent the voices of the majority of my fellow students. There are students that are confused as to why a learning resource center that was

included in last year's capital program would be postponed. I'm very proud to be a student of the Suffolk County Community College at Eastern Campus. However, our current Learning Resource Center is lacking mainly in space as my colleague had stated before. My fellow students and I have to frequent other libraries to complete research because of this lack of space. Some of these students as you have heard earlier even comment on how their prior high school facilities provided more space and updated technologies.

As the community recognizes the caliber of students the college produces, enrollment is steadily increasing. The past four years there has been a 26% increase, just to restate what Jennifer Golding had said. And the students feel that the college had fostered a learning and comfortable environment; not ask their students to find the space to complete their work in other places. The majority of our students are not typical college students. They are returning students and they are aware of what happens on their campus and are active in their community. They are concerned and they are confused as to why there would be a postponement to a program that the state has approved which could not •• which could only serve to benefit our students and our community in the future. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Mr. Pilletere, I just want to thank you for coming down today. I was at the honors complication. And you are certainly more than one voice, sir. And I was glad to see you here today not only as a representative from the student body of Suffolk Community College, but for those who do not know, Mr. Pilletere is also a decorated soldier in our armed forces as well. So, thank you for coming down. I was not surprised to see you here today. Very good to see you.

MR. PILLETIERE:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Thank you. Okay. Carolyn Fahey.

MS. FAHEY:

Good morning. I'm here to talk about the Economic Development Capital Program for the next few years. And I wasn't sure if you had any questions so I'll be here for specific questions. But in case you didn't, I wanted to just basically go over some comments that were in the

Budget Review Report regarding the Air National Guard. Continually throughout the report, Budget Review mentions that the Air National Guard has not made any financial commitment or financial contribution to certain projects. What I wanted to give to you today was just a brief idea as to the importance the Air National Guard has to Gabreski Airport and the services that it brings to us inherently just by them being there.

You know that we have a tower. General aviation facilities are not required to have a tower. The Air National Guard services that tower, staffs that tower and equips that tower. That's not by money that you see in our Capital Budget anywhere. They bring with them an instrument landing system and other landing approach systems that the airport normally would not have without the Air National Guard's presence there. They bring a security presence and they bring staffing presence, snow removal, land maintenance and so on. Their presence at the airport not only serves the national security presence but it also brings Gabreski Airport from being a basic general aviation airport up three or four levels to a different level that allows us to attract a higher level of general aviation aircraft. I just wanted to give you that brief overview that them being there is not just a national security presence but the services that they bring to us are not seen in our Operating Budget. They're not seen in our Capital Budget. But they do enhance the services at Gabreski Airport tremendously, which then bring value to us. I'll be here if there's any specific questions on the Capital Budget.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Carolyn, I have a question. I looked through the Capital Budget. I didn't see the funding for the transponder system that we talked about in terms of •• one of the problems at Gabreski has classically been the collection of fees for landing of aircraft and to try to get a higher degree of accountability there. We had talked about a program to put in an automatic reader that would know who is landing. Can you show me where that is in the Capital Budget?

MS. FAHEY:

I believe it's Capital Project 5731. It's the land account. So that money's already been appropriated. So you won't see it. It's ••

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

It's appropriated already.

MS. FAHEY:

Yes, it's already appropriated. So we're in the process of reviewing the need for that. There

are several pieces of legislation affecting fees that you've sponsored that we're reviewing. We do have a new airport manager on. And I need to rely on his experience and whether or not that landing counter is going to do what it needs to do and what we expect it to do. So, he's in the process of reviewing the specifications on that piece of equipment. If it's a go, then, we're going to go out to RFP. We've been working with the County Attorney's Office in drafting up the RFP. You won't see it in this year's funds. It's in funds already appropriated.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah, I didn't realize it was already appropriated. That's why I couldn't find it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Thank you. Mr. Rooney. Kevin Rooney. Kevin, I apologize. I didn't realize you were going to speak after the last student. But now you have our full attention.

MR. ROONEY:

Madam Chairwoman, Mr. Chairman, members of the joint committee, good morning. My name is Kevin Rooney. I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Oil Heat Institute of Long Island. The Institute is a not•for•profit trade association representing the interest of both the oil heating industry and the more than 300,000 homeowners whom we serve throughout Suffolk County. I am also the CEO of the Oil Heat Comfort Corporation, a totally separate and independent non•profit corporate entity, established a fund work force development programs and to provide technical and professional training to the oil, heating and HVAC industries. It is in the latter capacity that I appear before you this morning to discuss the current future funding needs of the Suffolk Community College.

Last September we very proudly inaugurated the first and only HVACR two•year degree program in applied sciences on Long Island at the College's Brentwood campus. The initial enrollment of 21 students, men and women of all ages, employment backgrounds and experiences have now completed their first year in the program. This September the total enrollment in the HVACR program is expected to be approximately 78 students, an increase in freshman enrollment of some 270%. An additional classroom has already been taken over and will be converted to a second laboratory to ease the anticipated congestion. But clearly the program in only its second year has already outgrown the physical limitations of its existing space.

My earlier use of the term "we" is intentional and purposeful. It denotes the legal partnership

which exists between the oil heating industry and the community college. The Memorandum of Understanding signed last year between President LaLima and myself commits both parties •• I'm sorry •• between both parties commits us to spending half a million dollars over a ten•year period, half of which will be used to offset operating costs and the remainder to be used for student scholarships and tuition grants.

In addition, my industry fully equipped and installed the HVAC laboratory in the Nesconset building at virtually no cost to the college. This hands on state•of•the•art facility using live fired equipment is now nationally recognized and recently became the first such facility in the country to receive the prestigious technical program certification from the National Oil Heat Research Alliance. I must also note that despite the oil heating industry's physical and financial involvement, the HVACR degree program is fuel neutral; that is students receive technical training in both oil and gas heating systems, heat pumps, air conditioning and refrigeration. This program is not about promoting my industry over any other industry. It is about providing men and women with the academic and technical skills needed to become productive and well paid members of the Suffolk County work force.

According to the US Department of Labor, the increasing sophistication of HVACR systems in commercial, industrial and residential buildings has created a greater demand for highly skilled technicians with highly specialized training needs. In fact, the Bureau of Labor statistics predicts that the demand for master HVACR technicians will out pace the needs for all other occupations through and beyond the end of this decade. Thus, in light of both the quantifiable need to train new technicians and the rapid expansion of student enrollment in the existing HVACR degree program, it is simply incomprehensible that in the County Executive's capital budget, proposal, revenue slated for the planning and design of a new state•of•the•art stand alone building are deferred for an additional year and construction funds are further deferred to subsequent years. This project was included in last year's capital program and is included in the SUNY five•year plan. Since half of the money for planning, design and construction will be provided by New York State, deferrals into subsequent years could not only risk losing those offset revenues, but could further result in the demise of the existing program as an engine of both work force and economic development here in Suffolk County.

Having spent most of my professional career in and around government, I fully understand the fiscal constraints and constituent demands with which all elected officials must grapple on a daily basis. But to defer planning, design and construction monies for an HVAC program, which exhibit such promise, which meets current and future industry work force and consumer needs

and which is financially supported by our state government is foolhardy in the extreme. The one thing I know of government and public policy is that short term fixes never, ever lead to long-term solutions. The exigencies of our current condition of fiscal and economic distress should not be the rationale for killing the goose which will one day provide us with the golden egg.

Therefore, I most respectfully request that this Legislature reject the County Executive's capital budget proposal and restore the \$500,000 for planning and design of an HVAC center at the Brentwood campus for the FY 2005 capital budget with monies allocated for construction to commence in FY 2006. Thank you for your time and attention. I will be glad to take any questions.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Thank you, Kevin. Just a question. I see that the total estimated cost is 5,450,000. Is that 2,250,000 •• that was quick calculation, right •• to the County or does that represent our 50% of 9 million? You said the state ••

MR. ROONEY:

That is the total cost of the entire project, half of which would be ••

LEG. NOWICK:

And then the state will come in with 50%.

MR. ROONEY:

As I understand it, half of which will be provided by the state, half of which will be provided by the county.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

And those monies if we don't allocate this in 2005, you think that those monies ••

MR. ROONEY:

To be perfectly honest, Ms. Nowick, I am always fearful when monies are allocated by the state and then those money are deferred to subsequent years. From my long three decades of experience in dealing with state government, monies that get deferred invariably get lost. There are many other pressing needs that will come up in future years. And it's kind of like the old adage, if you don't use it, lose it.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

And I see that. And I also see there is a chart here about estimated revenues in the future and estimated expenses and estimated surplus. And I also understand that Budget Review has written here that possibly the estimated surplus is not exactly that much. But having been to this HVAC •• is that the ••

MR. ROONEY:

HVACR.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Yes, HVACR room, if you will, and having seen what you've done, I have to say even if there wasn't a surplus, that this particular program •• and I don't know how many of my fellow Legislators have been there •• this program helps the students who need to develop some type of a trade.

MR. ROONEY:

U•hum.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

And I understand that they do not have to go through an entire curriculum. And many students can't go through a curriculum, yet they need to have a trade. It benefits your industry and it benefits them as well. I find this a very important asset to the community college.

MR. ROONEY:

I think it is, too. And that's why I'm here. The interesting thing when we started the process of planning for this facility a couple of years ago, we anticipated that most of the students would be coming out of high school. That is, in fact, not the case. These are students, men and women in their 20's, in their 30's •• I think that we have one student in his 40's •• who are coming from other employment backgrounds, other trades, and are looking for a very good, very well paying trade that is in demand. I mean, what we're talking about here is taking people who currently work in a sheet metal shop or a metal plating shop or a brake assembly plant and giving them technical expertise as well as academics that go along with it, to provide them we a better job. This is all about upward mobility.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

I truly agree.

MR. ROONEY:

This is about giving people opportunities that they don't otherwise have. And I honestly can say in the 22 years that I have represented the heating oil industry, this is one program that I am not only the most excited about and the most passionate about, but it is a program that offers incredible promise; not just for my industry. Talk to anyone from Keyspan, talk to anyone in the air conditioning or refrigeration industries. They can't find trained technicians either.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

And I also read where you estimate 400 to 500 people retiring from this industry. So the need is there.

MR. ROONEY:

My industry alone, half of our work force is going to literally disappear in the next ten years because of retirements. Where do we •• where do we come up with replacements? And this program, the beauty of it is that, you know, you can train people to be technicians. But what the community college is doing is it's training them to be productive citizens. They not only get the technical skills, but they also get skills in math and English and computer science as well as the technology. It's making them whole. It's making them fuller individuals, participating citizens. God, this is what we're supposed to be all about.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

And I have to tell you that I do spend a lot of time in my house with a lot of young people around; too many sometimes.

MR. ROONEY:

I know the feeling.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

But there are some young people •• and I say 25 to 30 •• some of them can go become teachers, professionals, lawyers; and others are floundering. And this is an answer. And this is a very important aspect of the community college.

MR. ROONEY:

Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Well, thank you very much. Does anybody have any questions? Thank you.

MR. ROONEY:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Charles Stein.

MR. STEIN:

Thank you. I have two hand•outs. One is a letter that the President asked me to read into the record addressed to the Honorable Lynne Nowick and members of the Committee. That's a hand•out. And also we did a side•by•side analysis comparing the Budget Review Office report with our comments that I'll also handout.

Thank you. I'm Charles Stein. I'm Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs at Suffolk Community College. Dr. Pippins asked me to read this memo into the record, which has been addressed to you. "I apologize sincerely for not being able to attend the Capital Budget's Meeting with you this morning. I have a family commitment scheduled long ago which cannot be changed to accommodate this very important meeting. This opportunity to be heard by you, even by letter, is an effort to emphasize the importance of the college's capital program. It is completely entwined with our ability to provide a quality education that is transferable and prepares our students for the world that awaits them upon graduation. Our students form the work force that determines our competitiveness as a region. It is also important to remember that buildings and learning environment send powerful messages to our students. With your support, the SCCC campus environment can send empowering and supportive messages. As you know, the College's Capital Budget is prepared in accordance with the State's five•year plan as well as the County's three•year plan. Funding through the County plan is vital to have the plan accepted for funding by the state. It could be very difficult to determine three or five years out, the success of a particular program, for instance, the HVAC Program, which is growing by leaps and bounds and will be limited only by the amount of space available. The Capital Budget and Program for 2005 through 2007 proposed by the County Executive was received by the College on April 21st. After review of its content, it appears the following changes from our request have occurred. With respect to the two new projects requested

neither have been included."

That was the recreation center at the Eastern Campus and the renovation to the Sagtikos Building at the Grant Campus. The Eastern Campus does not have a true athletic space. A limited number of physical education classes are held outdoors, but there are no locker rooms, no place for students to shower. This building would be used for physical education classes, athletics and recreation. It would be made available to community residents for recreational use and would allow the Eastern Campus to serve as a complete academic center for Eastern Suffolk. With respect to the Sagtikos Building, the Grant Campus will have an instructional space deficit of over 50% in 2005 based on SUNY standards. The requested renovation will partially address this deficit. And the space will become available only after a new learning resource center is completed. And then will be converted into science laboratories and classrooms.

This respect to the existing projects, there are 14 projects with continuous authorizations outstanding. Of these 14, the Executive made changes to four of our requests. And there's a table showing them. The first one is the HVACR Building, which you've heard so much about. The President has stated this project was included in last year's capital program. It is included in the state's new five•year plan. The college requested that funds be advanced by one year for both design and construction given that the program is quickly outgrowing the space available on the Grant Campus. The Executive's proposal results in no advance in design funds and a delay of one year in construction funds relative to last year's budget. This proposal would adversely affect the growth of this very successful academic program

ADA compliance. This project was included in last year's capital program. It is included in the State's new five•year plan. The college requested no changes relative to last year's budget. The Executive's proposal results in a delay of one year in construction funds relative to last year's budget. This proposal will adversely affect the college's ability to respond to the concerns of physically disabled at all three campuses.

The Learning Resource Center at the Grant Campus, this project was included in last year's capital program and it is not as yet included in the state's new five•year plan. The college requested no changes relative to last year's budget keeping this project scheduled in subsequent years until it can be adequately funded by the State. The executive's proposal removes this project from the program. This proposal will exacerbate the growing spaces needs at the Grant Campus and could jeopardize our attempts to secure State funding. Regarding the

Learning Resource Center at the East Campus, this project was included in last year's capital program. It is included in the State's five-year plan. The College requested that funds be advanced by one year for both design and construction given the need for a true working library on the East Campus. The Executive's proposal results in a delay of two years in design funds and one year in construction funds relative to last year's budget. This proposal puts the College at risk regarding its accreditation at the East Campus given the repeated negative comments by Middle States regarding the current library. It should also be noted that the partial renovation of the Peconic Building was included by the Executive with design in 2006. Yet this project cannot proceed without a new library. This is the second year in a row that the Peconic renovation is funded before the library in the Executive's proposed program.

In addition to the negative impact on the College's ability to support economic development, we must also be mindful of the potentially negative impact on our ability to secure capital funds. It is my understanding that Senator LaValle is coordinating initiatives to secure additional funding for capital projects. At the same time SUNY is considering proposals to redirect funds away from colleges not using allocated resources. Our capital program should be ready to seize the possibility of securing state funds. The only way to do that is to maintain our projects in the capital program to demonstrate local support.

While we recognize the competing issues relative to capital funding, it is our hope that the Legislature will recognize the importance of the College's capital budget request and provide assistance so we can continue to serve the needs of our students and community.

I thank you for the time. And I and my staff are here to answer any questions that you may.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Thank you. And I just will mention that Dr. Pippins did call me up and tell me that she did have a problem with the meeting and with the time schedule. So, it wasn't like she did not call. Legislator Villoria-Fisher has a question.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Chuck, you know how I feel about that Eastern Campus library. I invite my colleagues, whether or not you live on the east end of the County, to visit that campus and to visit that library. And to share with me the embarrassment that I feel when I see the level of importance that we give to education being at a very poor state of affairs in that Eastern Campus. That library is smaller than the library in most of our high schools. It's

smaller than the libraries at many of our elementary schools. And that's disgraceful. So, I want to reiterate that for the growing population on the eastern end of the County, for our own self•respect as a county that promotes and celebrates and supports education, we must move on with this. And financially, it is part of the five•year state plan. We need to use it so that we don't lose it. We really need to use it. We are also risking the accreditation of the Eastern Campus. Middle States has warned us that that library facility is inadequate. We must preserve the funding for that program.

But I do have other questions about •• it's very confusing when you're comparing all of these different budgets and you look at where the state funding is available and where it's not. And the eastern campus, we do have the state approval. It's in the five•year plan. We can get ready to move forward with the planning in 2005. And the construction could commence in 2006. Is that correct, Budget Review?

MR. ROONEY:

Yes.

LEG. VILORIA•FISHER:

That's all correct. But I'm very confused with the Grant Campus library.

MR. ROONEY:

If I may?

LEG. VILORIA•FISHER:

Sure.

MR. ROONEY:

Last year with the help of the Legislature, we included two projects in the subsequent years' portion.

LEG. VILORIA•FISHER:

Okay.

MR. ROONEY:

One of them was the Learning Resource Center at the Grant Campus. The other one was a

science classroom building at the Ammerman Campus.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

Okay, I remember that.

MR. ROONEY:

And that one has been kept in the Executive's proposal. The reason why the Legislature saw fit to include those in subsequent years was to allow us to proceed up in Albany to try and secure additional state funds to support those programs. And as the President's letter pointed out, it's her understanding that Senator LaValle is actually working on those efforts to remove that program from •• that project from the capital program even though it was in subsequent years.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

Right. There would have been no impact in 2005 ••

MR. ROONEY:

Correct.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

•• to the budget.

MR. ROONEY:

Correct. But by maintaining it in the subsequent years' portion ••

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

It's on the table.

MR. ROONEY:

It's on the table. And we can then proceed with attempting to get state funding. If the capital budget after your efforts and whatever is done by the County Executive ultimately is approved by this Legislature, does not include that project in the subsequent years, well, then, there's no reason for anybody in Albany to attempt to get funding for it.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

Okay, thank you, Chuck. I was •• I just wanted to clarify whether there had been any money earmarked in 2005 for that project.

MR. ROONEY:

No.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

And it doesn't impact the 2005 budget.

MR. ROONEY:

No.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

Okay. And in subsequent years, how flexible is that? When would the planning for that have to occur?

MR. ROONEY:

Well, subsequent years is defined as 2008 and nine. And what we would obviously attempt to do once we were able to secure some state funding, is come back to the Executive and to the Legislature and say, guess what, it looks as though we're going to get some state support on this.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

And if I understand it correctly, Chuck, the money from the state would not even be available before 2009? I believe that's what Budget Review had written about this?

MR. ROONEY:

It would have to go into the next five•year plan.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

Okay. The current five•year plan, what's the span; from what year to what year?

MR. ROONEY:

We are now looking at a period that goes through 2008.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

Okay. So, that's why this money would not be available before 2009 because it would have to be in the next five-year plan?

MR. ROONEY:

Right. But if we don't include it, even if it's in subsequent years ••

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

I understand that.

MR. ROONEY:

•• then we can't even ask for funding.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

I understand that. I just •• I was just looking for the impact on this year. And we're saying zero impact on this year.

MR. ROONEY:

Right.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

Or the next year.

MR. ROONEY:

Right.

LEG. VILORIA • FISHER:

Okay. Thank you, Chuck.

MR. ROONEY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Legislator Carpenter.

LEG. CARPENTER:

Thank you. I want to •• Chuck, thank you for this little grid. I think it's very helpful to know where everybody stands on the projects. I would like to thank the students for coming down. I think their perspective is very, very helpful and really means a lot. And just so that everyone is aware of your nod, that our Budget Review Office in taking what recommendations the County Executive or his request for the capital program that our Budget Review Office takes the budget, goes over it and then presents their opinions to us as a Legislature. And I was really very happy to see that they are •• for the most part very supportive of a lot of the projects for the college and especially the one for the East library. And we're going to do all we can to advance that project as quickly as possible. So, thanks for coming down. You made a difference.

MR. ROONEY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN NOWICK:

Thank you. Is there anyone else that needs to address this Committee? If not, I guess we will close the meeting.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Just a question for Budget Review on a project sort of pertaining to Veterans and Seniors; project 1773, memorial for the victims of the terrorist attacks of September 11th. I just wanted some clarification. In your evaluation, you said you do not recommend increasing funds for this project until after the design phase is complete and the amount of private funding is known. Do you have a time frame? I know that the \$325,000 has been allocated for the design phase. Do you know what the status of that is? And any time frame in which we can move forward this project?

MR. SPERO:

I think that's •• that's what's going •• is in the works now. Establishing what the memorial will be and the time frame for its construction. The capital program has funds scheduled in '07 for the actual construction and \$300,000; but that's just an estimate at this point of what it may be to construct a memorial. So, there's a lot of details that have to be worked out yet for this

memorial.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

You have no time frame as to the status of the planning phase right now? Will we know something within a year's time to include it in next year's budget?

MR. SPERO:

I mis•spoke.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

It was 2006, I believe that it was ••

MR. SPERO:

The total project •• estimated project costs is \$1,325,000.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Correct.

MR. SPERO:

Public Works requested \$3 million for the construction based on design concepts that have been submitted. But, again that's all ••

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

It's all still conceptual at this point.

MR. SPERO:

Yeah, that's correct.

CHAIRMAN LOSQUADRO:

Okay. Very good. Thank you. We stand adjourned.

(THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 12:20 PM)